

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

June 7, 2005

Project No. 90-184 (4) in Rowland Heights is a proposal to develop 55 homes, improve a hiking trail and dedicate privately owned open space to a public agency. To accommodate the construction of the homes, the project includes a proposed amendment to the Rowland Heights Community General Plan to change a portion of the 170-acre site, which is currently designated as Open Space, to Urban 1. The proposal also includes the related removal of the dedication of construction rights to the County which was a condition of a prior land division approval. Project No. 90-184 (4) also includes Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 49411, Conditional Use Permit Case No. 90-184 (4) and Oak Tree Permit Case No. 90-184 (4). The Regional Planning Commission denied the project on September 1, 2004, after hearing extensive public testimony over the course of several public hearing dates. The Commission's denial of the project was based in part on the fact that the 170-acre site had been previously restricted and set aside as open space and the lack of sufficient information to find that sufficient public benefits outweighed the loss of the open space. The denial has been appealed to the Board.

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BURKE	_____
YAROSLAVSKY	_____
KNABE	_____
ANTONOVICH	_____
MOLINA	_____

While at the Commission, the applicant suggested an alternative proposal of 43 homes on approximately 30 acres, which also included the legalization of an existing horse stable facility on a portion of the overall 70-acre site. Consideration of this alternative would require initiation by the Board or the Commission of an amendment to Rowland Heights Community General Plan to allow the operation of the stables at its current location. The suggested alternative also included the funding of staff to maintain and manage the remaining open space. There may be other potential community benefits which could be offered by the applicant. The applicant should be provided an opportunity to present a package of community benefits so that the Planning Commission can determine whether a plan amendment is warranted for an alternative project. The public should be provided with an opportunity to provide full input.

With the current demand for housing and the dwindling supply of developable land, this Board is likely to be faced with the future prospect of redesignating open space in our Community and General Plans to accommodate needed housing development. Proposals to redesignate open space may be appropriate if the corresponding public benefits outweigh the loss of the open space. Such benefits may include the provision of alternative open space, conversion of privately held to publicly held open space, funding for the management of publicly held open space, funding for equestrian and hiking trail improvements, improvements to community facilities, funding of recreation programs or other appropriate community benefits identified by the local community working with an applicant.

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As the advisory agency to this Board, the Planning Commission working with planning staff is well equipped to reconsider this project and any alternatives and review the technical details before returning the case to this Board with a recommendation:

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT:

1. Refer Local Plan Amendment Case No. 90-184 (4), Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 49411, Conditional Use Permit Case No. 90-184 (4) and Oak Tree Permit Case No. 90-184 (4) back to the Regional Planning Commission for further proceedings in accordance with the following instructions:
 - a. Take the steps necessary to initiate an amendment to the Rowland Heights Community General Plan to allow the Commission to consider alternative land use proposals for the project site which include the horse stables and to consider whether proposed community benefits associated with an alternative project outweigh the loss of the open space.
 - b. Obtain community input by holding at least one noticed public meeting in the local community.
 - c. Consider potential community benefits including but not limited to the provision of alternative open space, conversion of privately held to publicly held open space, funding for the management of publicly held open space, funding for equestrian and hiking trail improvements, improvements to community facilities, funding of recreation programs or other appropriate community benefits identified by the local community working with an applicant.

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